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Mandated areas

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Note by the Secretariat

Addendum

United Nations Children's Fund

Summary

Over the past year, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has taken action on many of the numerous recommendations the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues made to the organization. At the global level, UNICEF has finalized a digest on the rights of indigenous children to be released at the end of February 2004. UNICEF participated in the Day of General Discussion at the Committee on the Rights of the Child and supported the participation of two indigenous participants. Awareness on indigenous issues within the organization, under the framework of rights-based programming, has been promoted. In the area of data disaggregation, UNICEF participated in a workshop held in January 2004 and is considering ways for integrating this dimension into its data-collection system. At the regional level, a framework document for UNICEF work with indigenous children and communities in Latin America and the Caribbean is being finalized. Two case studies have been prepared. UNICEF also participated actively in the preparation for the Ibero-American Summit to ensure a focus on indigenous issues. A Latin American conference of indigenous children and youth is under preparation. The visit of the Secretary-General also provided an opportunity to strengthen inter-agency coordination in the region and give visibility to indigenous issues. At the country level, programmes have continued to address the specific needs of indigenous children and to promote the active participation of communities.

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Indigenous women are full partners in UNICEF programming. UNICEF works to ensure that their rights are fulfilled, by promoting women's participation and raising awareness on, and addressing, the discrimination they face, in particular in health and education and protection from violence and abuse.

A. Response to recommendations addressed exclusively to the United Nations Children's Fund under one or more items of the mandate of the Forum in the report on the second session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues*

Include questions on ethnicity, cultural and tribal affiliation and language in Demographic and Health and Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (para. 67).[1] Provide information from the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey data (para. 5 (b))

1. UNICEF participated actively in the workshop on data disaggregation organized by the secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. UNICEF hired an indigenous consultant who had the task of participating in the workshop and making recommendations as to how UNICEF could disaggregate data by indigenous origin. A UNICEF expert statistician made a presentation on data from the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey and the Demographic and Health Survey, with the following recommendations on how to analyse existing data and include data related to indigenous peoples within this framework:

(a) **Powerful advocacy needs to be developed on the importance of measuring indigenous populations. The majority of indicators for which data is obtained from household surveys is supported by a strong rationale based either on the Millennium Development Goals, or on other existing international agreements or mechanisms to monitor and evaluate programmes and interventions of Governments and international agencies;**

(b) **Active involvement is required in the design, implementation, reporting, analysis and dissemination of these surveys. This is something that should be done not only at the global levels but also at the country level;**

(c) **From the survey design perspective, the number of questions identifying indigenous populations will compete for space in a questionnaire with the questions needed for all the other areas to be measured. It is easier to advocate for the inclusion of a small number of questions if they are previously identified with clear wording, response categories and coding, sampling considerations, training and supervision instructions, data quality issues, data-processing requirements and tabulation plans;**

(d) **Although the added cost of including measurement of indigenous populations in any existing survey is not expected to be significant (assuming no more than two or three questions and no special sampling requirements) it is important to develop a minimum budget to buy, if necessary, part of the survey and to make sure that the data collected is properly transformed into useful information.**

Adopt a policy on indigenous children (para. 67). Develop policy on and guidelines regarding indigenous peoples before the third session of the Forum (para. 13)

2. The regional office of UNICEF for Latin America and the Caribbean is currently finalizing a regional document aimed at promoting the rights of indigenous

* *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2003, Supplement No. 23* (E/2003/43), chap. I.

children. The document is being elaborated in collaboration with indigenous representatives. Specifically, two members of the Forum from the region have been involved in the process. UNICEF aims to present and disseminate the paper at the third session of the Forum. This document is intended to serve as a framework for analysis and for the development of actions in favour of indigenous children in the region. Based on this framework, programme guidelines for the promotion of the rights of indigenous children will be developed.

Present a digest and case studies to the Forum at its third session (para. 10)

3. Digest No. 11, entitled "Ensuring the Rights of Indigenous Children", prepared by Innocenti Research Centre of UNICEF in consultation with indigenous peoples and international experts, has been finalized and will be launched at the end of February 2004. It will be made available at the third session of the Forum. UNICEF supported the translation of the outline of the Digest into indigenous languages, specifically Quechua, Wayunaiki and Kuna. In 2004, a user-friendly version of the Digest will be translated into at least four indigenous languages, including Quechua, Aimara, Quiché and Guaraní.

4. Within the framework of its human rights based approach to programming, UNICEF has undertaken two case studies on indigenous children. One deals with intercultural and bilingual education in Bolivia. The study has been completed and copies will be made available at the third session of the Forum. The publication is in Spanish, but a summary in English will also be available. The other is an overview of UNICEF cooperation in Ecuador for the rights of indigenous children, adolescents and women in that country. This study is currently being finalized. UNICEF will make it available as soon as possible.

Report on indigenous children with limited or no access to health-care services with recommendations for improved access (para. 66)

5. From its experience in working with indigenous communities in the area of health, UNICEF has identified several main issues related to access to health services. One is the lack of services in areas where indigenous people live, which can be remote areas, of difficult access, or which do not constitute priority location for Governments' investments. In addition, the cost of health care can be prohibitive for indigenous peoples who live in poverty. Often the mere lack of information on existing health services can also be an obstacle to access to health services. Importantly, one specific problem is the lack of cultural sensitivity of medical staff and techniques, which may not take into consideration traditional methods for health care and giving birth. Responses identified by UNICEF and implemented in country programmes include the training of indigenous leaders on health issues, mobile health-care units or transportation of medical staff to indigenous areas, and training of medical staff on traditional health methods. Broader activities include advocacy with Governments to ensure that their investments target the most marginalized.

Present an annual report to the Forum (para. 5 (b))

6. UNICEF is presenting its annual report to the Forum, upon Forum recommendations. Owing to a lack of resources, UNICEF does not have the internal capacity to present annually a fully detailed report and analysis of all of its activities related to indigenous children worldwide. Programme cycles at UNICEF are

country-based, and planned over a period of five years. Such decentralization allows for better participation of indigenous communities at the national and local levels, and ensures that programmes are well adapted to the specificities of the population. **Therefore, UNICEF wishes respectfully to refer the Forum to the report on its activities that it presented to the Forum in 2003 (E/C.19/2003/13). UNICEF is ready to provide the Forum with information on such activities in specific countries should the Forum so request.**

Report on the 2003 Ibero-American Summit (para. 12)

7. UNICEF participated actively in the preparation of the 2003 Ibero-American Summit, in particular through its involvement in the fifth Ibero-American Conference of Ministers and Senior Officials responsible for Children and Adolescents, held at Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia, on 18 and 19 September 2003, to ensure that indigenous issues were given visibility. With a view to promoting child participation and ensuring that children and adolescents had a voice in the Conference, UNICEF supported the organization of various sessions of the National Children's Parliament, with the participation of children and adolescents from around the country. At the third session, the Parliament prepared a declaration for the Ibero-American Conference of Ministers and High Officials for Children and Adolescents in four indigenous languages.

8. The Conference focused on indigenous and afro-descendant children and the need for their social inclusion. UNICEF supported the organization of a panel on indigenous issues to which high-level indigenous representatives participated, including a member of the Forum. The Conference issued a declaration for consideration by Heads of State and Government at the Ibero-American Summit in November. The declaration makes a strong plea in favour of the rights of indigenous and afro-descendant children, and calls for increased financial allocations and protection of budget allotments for children and adolescents in case of financial crisis, and mechanisms of external debt conversion in favour of investments in education. In particular, the delegates of the 19 participating countries resolved:

(a) To develop equitable and inclusive social policies and programmes in favour of indigenous and afro-descendant children;

(b) To promote and respect the participation of indigenous and afro-descendant children and adolescents in the spirit of the document of the United Nations special session on children entitled "A World Fit for Children";

(c) To take up the commitment of the thirteenth Ibero-American Conference of Education Ministers to respect and promote the right of indigenous people to bilingual education, to extend intercultural education to all children as a means of social inclusion, and to analyse debt conversion mechanisms for increased investment in the education system;

(d) To request their Governments and the international community to increase financial allocations and protect budget allotments for children and adolescents in case of financial crisis.

Appoint a goodwill ambassador on indigenous children and youth and urge all UNICEF ambassadors to pay attention to indigenous children and youth (para. 14)

9. UNICEF goodwill ambassadors are appointed to advocate for children, attract attention on the needs of children, fundraise for children and support the UNICEF mission to ensure every child's right to health, education, equality and protection. Goodwill ambassadors are thus not assigned a specific mandate with regard to a particular category of children, but work to promote children's rights, for all children, all the time, everywhere. They act on a voluntary basis. However, UNICEF stands ready fully to support actions by goodwill ambassadors aimed at raising awareness on the situation of indigenous children.

B. Response to recommendations addressed to one or more agencies or to the United Nations system in general under one or more items of the Forum mandate

Education on the Forum (para. 108)

10. UNICEF has initiated work with the secretariat of the Forum regarding strategies to organize a youth art competition for the design of a logo for the Forum and to help prepare a Department of Public Information publication aimed at informing indigenous children about the Forum. At the country level, UNICEF has supported inter-ethnic meetings of youth and adolescents, including workshops on leadership, in which participants receive information on the Forum. The Digest also highlights the importance of the Forum and is intended to be a tool for education on indigenous issues.

Prepare a Latin American conference of indigenous children and youth in 2004 (para. 21)

11. UNICEF is currently planning to support the organization of a conference of indigenous children and youth, most likely in Ecuador in August 2004. The decision to promote such a conference was made in July 2003 following the recommendation of the Forum. The modalities of the conference will be discussed further at a regional meeting in Latin America at the end of March 2004.

Address issues related to trafficking and sexual exploitation of indigenous girls (para. 16)

12. UNICEF works around the globe to address the trafficking and sexual exploitation of children. These programmes address the root causes of trafficking and sexual exploitation, which often lie in poverty and marginalization. Although not specifically focused on indigenous girls, UNICEF programmes and policy encompass issues faced by indigenous communities with regard to trafficking and sexual exploitation.

13. Both trafficking and sexual exploitation are global and local issues. At the global level, UNICEF advocates for the ratification of international instruments and the elaboration of standards and mechanisms that allow countries to cooperate. Trafficking and sexual exploitation are indeed transnational issues that require the setting up of inter-country agreements and mechanisms of cooperation. UNICEF is

working to promote and support such agreements, in particular at the regional level. At the country level, UNICEF focuses its efforts in the areas of prevention, protection, recovery and reintegration. An essential element of prevention consists in addressing poverty and ensuring that all children, especially girls, attend school so that they can eventually support themselves and become less vulnerable to trafficking and exploitation. Prevention also consists in promoting social mobilization in communities against the exploitation and trafficking of girls, and supporting awareness-raising campaigns that provide children and parents with adequate information to participate in their own protection. Protection implies strengthening legislation and guaranteeing that laws are actually enforced. Recovery and reintegration entail to identify victims, provide them with services and support, and find long-term solutions.

Report on capacity-building (para. 11)

14. **UNICEF believes that the Innocenti Digest on the rights of indigenous children will be a great tool for advocacy and capacity-building in this area, and invites other agencies to contribute to its dissemination.** UNICEF activities for capacity-building in indigenous communities take place at the national and local level. Specifically, UNICEF supports local governments and indigenous organizations in indigenous municipalities, with a view to strengthening their management and planification capacities, in particular for the implementation of policies in favour of children.

Initiate situation analyses on indigenous children (para. 8)

15. UNICEF country programmes are always based on situation analyses, which provide an overview of the situation of children and women in a given country and examine the root causes of that situation. In addition to elaborating situation analyses on women and children for its programming, UNICEF contributes to the situation analysis made by the United Nations country team through the common country assessment. In countries where indigenous people live, situation analyses identify and highlight existing disparities, and mention possible causes such as discrimination, geographic location, etc.

Focus on indigenous children and youth in the Healthy Environments for Children Alliance (para. 79)

16. Work on this issue has not yet been initiated.

Workshop on indigenous health with the World Health Organization and the United Nations Development Programme (para. 64)

17. The workshop has not yet been planned.

Conduct study on legal frameworks and social programmes on indigenous urban youth (para. 15)

18. Work on the study has not yet begun.

Gather and disaggregate data on indigenous infants, children and mothers based on criterion relating to ethnicity, cultural and tribal affiliation and language (para. 70) and develop new indicators on indigenous children and youth (para. 9)

19. See section A above on the same issue.

C. Other significant information regarding recent policies, programmes, budgetary allocations or activities regarding indigenous issues within the Fund

Follow-up to the visit of the Secretary-General to Latin America

20. The Secretary-General's visit to Latin America has given further impetus and visibility to the situation of indigenous peoples. On this occasion, UNICEF supported the translation of the Secretary-General's statement regarding indigenous peoples into Quechua and Guarani. UNICEF is committed to build on this momentum to trigger action by the United Nations system in the region. A meeting was convened by the Department of Political Affairs with representatives from the United Nations system at headquarters and in the region. UNICEF is committed to taking this opportunity, together with other agencies, to take further action at the regional level to advocate for the rights of indigenous peoples. As a result of this meeting, an inter-agency strategy is in the process of being elaborated, and the inter-agency coordination at the regional director's level is being strengthened on indigenous issues. **As agreed with other agencies, the Millennium Development Goals framework should be reviewed from an indigenous peoples' rights perspective. UNICEF will work to ensure that data on indigenous peoples is gathered, in order to analyse and address their situation with a view to reducing disparities.**

Global consultation on the human rights-based approach to programming

21. In September 2003, UNICEF held its Second Global Consultation on the Human Rights-Based Approach to Programming, at Quito. Such consultations gather senior UNICEF staff from headquarters and from various regions in order to discuss and inform UNICEF's rights-based programming at the country level. The Second Consultation included an agenda item devoted to indigenous issues, where the work of the Forum, as well as two case studies on programming in Bolivia and Ecuador were presented. **The outcome document of the consultation highlights the importance of indigenous issues as one of the areas of focus for rights-based programming.**

Day of General Discussion at the Committee on the Rights of the Child on the rights of indigenous children

22. UNICEF contributed actively to the Day of Discussion, through the submission of document containing a set of recommendations regarding the right of indigenous children to education, as well as through the participation of UNICEF representatives from the office in Geneva, the Innocenti Research Centre, headquarters and the Latin American region. In addition, UNICEF funded the participation of two indigenous participants, a youth and a rapporteur for one of the groups.

Country programmes in 2003

23. In 2003, UNICEF continued to work with indigenous communities at the country level towards the realization of indigenous children's rights through its programmes of cooperation. Following is a non-exhaustive overview of UNICEF programmes at the country level:

(a) Programmes for birth registration targeting indigenous communities have taken place in Peru, Panama, Venezuela and Bolivia;

(b) Culturally sensitive health programmes have been supported in the Niger, Paraguay, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Venezuela and Paraguay, and immunization campaigns in indigenous areas have been launched in Peru and Nicaragua;

(c) Bilingual and intercultural education addressing the needs of indigenous children have continued in Mexico, Ecuador, Bolivia, Guatemala, Brazil, the United Republic of Tanzania, Thailand, Guyana and the Philippines;

(d) Water and sanitation projects have been supported in Paraguay, Panama and Bolivia;

(e) Early childhood development has been a component of country programmes in Paraguay, Panama, Bangladesh and Venezuela;

(f) Specific activities for the promotion of indigenous children have been supported in Nicaragua, Bolivia, Brazil, Venezuela, and Guatemala;

(g) Programme for the Andean Region and Amazonic subregional programmes, integrating projects with indigenous communities in these subregions, have continued to be implemented.

D. Information and suggestions regarding the special theme of the third session, "indigenous women"

24. UNICEF is guided in its work by its Mission Statement, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. According to the UNICEF Mission Statement, in addition to the Fund's mandate to assure that the rights of every child are respected and fulfilled everywhere and without discrimination, it is also its task to promote the equal rights of women and girls and to support their full participation in the political, social and economic development of their communities. The Convention on the Rights of the Child states that all children must be assured in their rights without discrimination of any kind — including gender and ethnic origin — and that they must enjoy the right to participate in their own culture. Likewise, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women highlights the importance of the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women in the exercise of their human rights in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil and other fields. Specifically, in its preamble, the Convention refers to the eradication of all forms of racism and racial discrimination. The Fund's human rights-based approach to programming implies that UNICEF activities are based on human rights treaties and are aimed at fulfilling the rights of women and children. This is done with the active participation of indigenous women and children, by

empowering them and ensuring that they are the key actors in their own development.

25. **UNICEF believes that the situation of indigenous women has to be understood within a framework that incorporates several elements, including:**

(a) **Indigenous women's voice;**

(b) **The socio-cultural and economic context;**

(c) **Processes of change led by women themselves within their social groups.**

26. Following are some of the initiatives that the UNICEF country offices have been supporting in order to promote the realization of indigenous women's and girls' rights.

27. In most of the countries where they live, indigenous women face a double discrimination, based on gender and their indigenous origin. UNICEF works with indigenous women to address such discrimination. In Guatemala, the first national report on the situation and rights of indigenous women was elaborated by the indigenous women's defence, with support from UNICEF and other agencies. The report shows how the rights of indigenous women have been systematically violated, and provides a strong basis for the elaboration and implementation of new policies for the participation and inclusion of indigenous women. Women's organizations were also supported in the production of a document entitled "Women in diversity", as an advocacy tool directed at political candidates. In Bolivia, in 2003, 535 indigenous women leaders from the Amazon region were trained in women's rights and leadership, and another 100 participated in fairs on the rights of women.

28. Education is a main focus of UNICEF work, as girls are often discriminated against in access to education, resulting in high illiteracy rates among indigenous women. This impacts on their children's rights, including the right to health and education. It also impairs the ability of women to participate in decision-making. In Bolivia, for example, programme activities have included literacy work with young women from seven indigenous Amazon people and literacy campaigns for indigenous women in rural municipalities. In the same country, UNICEF is initiating a programme aimed at improving the education of indigenous girls. In the Philippines, UNICEF has supported female functional literacy classes for mothers. Training materials have been translated into five indigenous languages for coverage among indigenous and marginalized groups. UNICEF and its partners have also begun to address gender disparities in the indigenous mountain regions of the north and in southern Philippines by developing girl-friendly school initiatives.

29. In the area of health, studies in several countries have demonstrated that indigenous women suffer from higher maternal mortality rates than their non-indigenous counterparts. This is often owing to the lack of adequate maternal care services. In order to address this issue, UNICEF has supported the training of traditional birth attendants in Argentina, El Salvador, Malaysia and Peru. In Guyana, UNICEF has carried out educational sessions for pregnant and lactating women. In Venezuela, caring mothers from day care centres were trained in practices for the attention of children under six years, taking into consideration the Wayúu upbringing patterns, and community mothers from non-formal community centres were trained in rights, indigenous education and Wayunaiki reading-writing. A study

on upbringing patterns and childhood development in indigenous populations in Venezuela is also under way in agreement with the communities concerned. It consists in a bibliographic research as well as field investigations in six indigenous populations (Ye'kuana, Piaroa, Warao, Pemón Wayúu and Añú). When the final report is available, workshops on childhood development and indigenous people will be carried out with partners.

30. UNICEF also works to protect indigenous women and girls against violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation. In Brazil, UNICEF has accomplished studies on black and indigenous domestic working girls in Belém, Recife and Belo Horizonte, while in Guyana, UNICEF has promoted women's economic empowerment and formed groups of Amerindian women in non-farm-based activities. In Venezuela, a campaign aimed at addressing violence against women was launched, with the creation of a phone line and the training of protection counsellors in several regions. In Mexico, UNICEF supported the publication of a study entitled "Niñas Indigenas: La Esperanza Amenazada".

E. Conferences and other meetings under the agency regarding indigenous issues in 2004-2005

31. UNICEF has tentative plans to hold a Latin American conference of indigenous children and youth in August 2004.

Notes

[1] The paragraphs in parentheses refer to *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2003, Supplement No. 23* (E/2003/43), chap. I.